

# THE SCRIPTURAL CLAIMS OF TEETOTALISM.

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CHRISTIANS of every name ! to you the following appeal is made. Not to the drunkard, to persuade him to become sober ; but to the temperate man, that he may be induced to relinquish a lawful indulgence for the good of others. Neither to *all* the temperate are the following pages addressed ; but to those among them who, being sincere disciples of Him who "came to seek and to save them that are lost," are open to the influence of gospel motives, and are desirous of acting out, in every case in which the glory of God and the welfare of men may be promoted, those great principles of philanthropy which, either personally or by his apostles, he announced. As followers of him "who went about doing good," they are ready to take up their cross, and follow him, whithersoever he summons them. And they believe also, that he *does* summon them to every act and every sacrifice which the welfare of their fellow-men demands. They are convinced that any gratification ought to be relinquished, which, though harmless to themselves, is pernicious to others, especially if it leads them into sin, and impedes the progress of the gospel. The principle is admitted ; its application alone has to be proved. To such persons, on the grounds of Christian obligation, the cause of Total Abstinence appeals.

It is well known, that a few years ago a Society was instituted for the promotion of temperance, on the principle of abstinence from *ardent spirits*—but that its results greatly disappointed the expectations of its benevolent founders. Another principle was then adopted, viz. total abstinence from all intoxicating beverages whatsoever. It is equally well known, that Societies founded on this principle have spread throughout the world, and have been the means of reclaiming multitudes of confirmed drunkards ; of producing, in numerous districts, a vast and obvious change in the entire moral aspect of society ; of restoring happiness and plenty to many a wretched, desolate home ; of inducing thousands who previously lived in the entire neglect of religion, habitually to listen to the truths of the gospel ; and thus, have been instru-

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mental in restoring to their right mind, and bringing to the feet of Jesus, a vast multitude who previously were sunk below the level of the brutes, but who now, through the operation of Divine grace, have become ornaments of society and to the church; and by their consistent lives, give evidence that they have become "heirs of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

But, though this temperance reformation has been so eminently successful, it cannot be questioned that in this country it has not by any means received the general sanction and encouragement of the Church of Christ. The bulk of professing Christians, and of Christian ministers, refuse compliance with its principle; and if they do not treat it with contempt and ridicule—which is, alas! too frequently the case—at least decline its advocacy. Of course, there are very many exceptions; yet, as a whole, the Christian church may be said to stand aloof from the cause; and if she does not "curse it at all," neither does she "bless it at all." Its zealous friends, "fully persuaded in their own minds," not unnaturally ask, "How can these things be?" The only charitable reply to which enquiry is, that Christians generally are *not* "fully persuaded in their own minds." Their non-concurrence in this movement must not be charged on a want of Christian sincerity, and self-denying benevolence, but on the absence of the conviction that co-operation is their duty. The advocates of total abstinence cannot, however, but think that no Christian would refrain from encouraging their cause, even though he might not conform to its principle, much less would offer it the slightest opposition, unless he laboured under serious misapprehensions of their views and objects. To remove such misapprehensions, and to present the claims of the Temperance reformation in the light of gospel truth, is the object of this essay.

No attempt is about to be made to prove that there is, abstractedly, any sinfulness in the moderate use of alcoholic beverages. But a position will be taken which, it is conceived, is sustained by the clear testimony of the word of God, and will be assented to without controversy. It is this: that it is the duty of Christians to promote the welfare of their fellow-men by every lawful means. It is, therefore, their duty to abstain from any course of conduct which, though not sinful in itself, may prove injurious to the souls of others. If this be admitted,—and if it can be proved that the case in hand comes within the principle, that, in the present condition of society, the moderate use of intoxicating drinks by Christians is greatly conducive to one of the most destructive of

evils, an evil which, by aiming a death-blow at the welfare, physical, social, and eternal, of hundreds of thousands of our countrymen, demands that every energy be exerted to repress it, —then the assent of the reader will be gained to the principles of total abstinence.

There is no lack of scriptural authority for the general maxim on which we build our argument. The language of St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans (xiv. 21), is directly to the point. "IT IS GOOD NEITHER TO EAT FLESH, NOR TO DRINK WINE, NOR ANYTHING WHEREBY THY BROTHER STUMBLETH, OR IS OFFENDED, OR IS MADE WEAK." There is a similar statement in the First Epistle to the Corinthians (viii. 13):—"IF MEAT MAKE MY BROTHER TO OFFEND, I WILL EAT NO FLESH WHILE THE WORLD STANDETH, LEST I MAKE MY BROTHER TO OFFEND." There were many converts in the early church who retained some of their Jewish prejudices respecting meats clean and unclean, and who especially objected to eating the flesh of any animals which had been offered in sacrifice to the heathen gods. A similar cause may have made others scrupulous in drinking wine. The apostle states, that he himself felt no such difficulties. "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself." But, he adds, "To him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean;" and "he that doubteth (or putteth this distinction on meats) is damned if he eat; for whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." Though he himself would not sin, by partaking of meat offered to idols, yet if his brother considered such an act sinful, that brother would sin in following his example. "To him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean."

But here arises the question, "Am I justified in doing that which to me is *lawful*, if by such an act I encourage another to do the same thing, though to *him* it would be *unlawful*?" To this enquiry a clear response appears to be given by the apostle. "Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; and through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died! For when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak consciences, ye sin against Christ.—All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man *another's*

wealth.—Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God : even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.—Let us not judge one another : but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. If thy brother be grieved (or injured) with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died. For meat destroy not the work of God. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.”

The great principle involved in this quotation is evidently—that actions in themselves lawful, should be abstained from, if they encourage others to sin. Is this principle applicable to the moderate use of intoxicating drinks *in the existing state of society*? Many consider that it is ; and in support of this opinion, the reader's attention is respectfully solicited to the following propositions :—

I. That drunkenness is at the present day, and in this country, a vice so destructive and so prevalent, as to demand the special efforts of Christians to repress it.

II. That the drunkard is only secure from the danger of renewed intemperance, by totally abstaining from all indulgence in those beverages which have been the occasion of his sin.

III. That those who would successfully persuade others to the practice of Total Abstinence, must themselves abstain. If “to drink wine,” though it be not “unclean of itself,” yet is an encouragement to others to do so who cannot refrain from indulging to excess, and to whom, therefore, “it is unclean,” then it becomes every Christian to consider whether, by conforming to the drinking customs of our country, we do not act contrary to the great principle of the apostle, “It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or made weak.”

**I. DRUNKENNESS IS A VICE SO DESTRUCTIVE AND SO PREVALENT, AS TO DEMAND THE ESPECIAL EFFORTS OF CHRISTIANS TO REPRESS IT.**

Consider its ravages on the individual. It impairs the bodily health ; is the prolific parent of many terrible diseases ; undermines the physical strength, and hurries to a premature grave.

It dethrones reason, and sinks man to a level with the brute. It permanently enfeebles the intellect, and fills the mind with a gloom, which urges its victim to fresh excesses. It goads itself onward in the path of wretchedness and ruin.

Look in at the drunkard's *door*. What poverty, what woe ! See those ragged, half-fed, untaught children ! See that wife, pale, heart-broken, pining with grief and want ; and perhaps, seeking to drown her sorrows in the same cup which was the cause of them all !

Look into the drunkard's *heart*. What degradation of the moral nature ; what selfishness ; what insensibility ; what brutal hardness of heart, and deadness to all tender emotion ; what a closed door against all goodness ; what an open asylum for all vice !

Look at the drunkard's *influence on society*. Whence, but from drunkenness, arise the great proportion of the crimes that disgrace it, the evils that scourge it ? To what deeds of darkness has it driven ; what wilful destruction of property, what robberies, what licentiousness, what personal violence, what horrid cruelties, what revolting murders ! Who can calculate the black amount of crime for which this single vice has to answer !

Look at the drunkard's *soul*. He liveth as the heathen live, though his guilt is greater far. He is beyond the reach of the sound of the gospel. Drunkenness entails poverty, and poverty clothes a man with rags ; and thus attired, he shrinks from the decent assemblage of the sanctuary. He has no *disposition* to come. The effects of the last night's debauch have not yet passed off ; or, if comparatively sober, his habits have rendered any spot more attractive than the house of God : or, if he wanders within its precincts, his mind is generally in such a state as to be unable to comprehend and profit by anything he hears. What Bishop Burnet records of Lord Rochester is true of thousands : " He told me, that for five years together he was continually drunk ; not all the while under the visible effects of it, but his blood was so inflamed, that he was not in all that time cool enough to be perfect master of himself." Can such a man be in a fit state to mark, learn, and inwardly digest the truth ?

Look at the drunkard's *end*. How many die in their drunkenness ! While the demon is still strong within them—while belching forth oaths and blasphemies—with a mind already dead, as far as regards the capacity for penitence and prayer—multitudes are hurried, nay, hurry *themselves*, before their Judge ? And what are the future prospects of those who die as drunkards,

whether or not their last breath is heaved in intoxication? Is there, can there be, hope in their end? What saith the Scripture? "Neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor *drunkards*, shall inherit the kingdom of God." No! the drunkard must have his place in "the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." It is the second death. How terrible the doom! but not more terrible than true.

Such is the drunkard! A wreck in body and in mind, and the cause of misery to all around in *this* world; a ruined, wailing, hell-tormented soul in the world that is to come. Can we aggregate such an evil? Could we too much deplore it, even though it were of *rare* occurrence? But what, if it be *widely prevalent*? What, if it be the great, the crying sin, not of heathen countries, but of the so-called *Christian* world?

That this is the case, we have too convincing proof. Our streets will furnish it, our newspapers, our courts of justice, our workhouses, our prisons. How vast is the machinery for the prevention, discovery and punishment of crime! But this machinery is a vast body of evidence to prove the extent of drunkenness; for it is the concurrent testimony of all persons, who are qualified to give an opinion on the subject, that almost all the offences committed against the laws are traceable, directly or indirectly, to intemperance.

Justice Erskine, at the Salisbury assizes, when passing sentence on a prisoner, for a crime committed during intoxication, said, that "Ninety-nine out of every hundred criminal cases arose from the same cause." Justice Coleridge, at the Oxford assizes, said "I never knew a case which was not, either directly or indirectly, connected with intoxicating liquors." Justice Patteson, at the Norwich assizes, said to the grand jury, "If it were not for this drinking, you and I should have nothing to do." The Duke of Wellington has expressed his opinion, that drinking is invariably the cause of crimes committed in the army calling for the punishment of courts martial. The testimony of eminent admirals is similar respecting the navy. On the lowest computation, seven out of every eight cases of offences against the laws originate in drunkenness. How great then must be the prevalence of this evil!

The testimony of the Christian church corroborates too fully that of the magistrate. Of all offences requiring the exercise of discipline, those of drunkenness are by far the most numerous. More persons have been excommunicated from church-fellowship on account of this vice, than of all other inconsistencies put together. And how vast the aggregate of such lamentable cases!

Supposing that there are 30,000 Christian communities, of various denominations, in this country, and that during the last three years each church has lost one member through intemperance (and this is a supposition much below the truth), then we have a loss to the church of 30,000 members during three years. This is equal to an annual loss of 50 churches of 200 members each. Now, suppose this fearful calamity were occasioned in some other way. Suppose some persecuting power were to arise and utterly to destroy, within ten years, 500 churches, by subjecting their 100,000 members to martyrdom !

And is it the less real, because it is less obvious ? less to be lamented and guarded against, because it destroys the *soul*, and not the body alone—because it takes from the church of God to the congregation of Satan, by sin—instead of conveying them to the mansions of glory by a martyr's death ?

The evil is not limited to private members of churches. It has cast down wounded many of the standard-bearers and commanders of the army, as well as multitudes in the ranks. The majority of cases in which ministers of the gospel have made shipwreck of faith, are attributable to this cause. How many who were eloquent, and learned, and successful, and who appeared full of holy zeal and love for God and souls, have, by intemperance, brought reproach on their order, their church, and their Master ; cast fearful stumbling-blocks in the way of thousands ! exerted an influence far more baneful than their former labours were beneficial ; and then have left the world in which they have become degraded and despised, to render up a solemn account for trampling down the vineyard they had been sent to cultivate !

The injurious influence of drunken professors extends to the distant nations of the earth, and is one of the greatest hindrances to the spread of the gospel among the heathen. Often do they fling back in scorn the instructions offered them by a nation, in this respect, so inferior to themselves, so that they may well turn round to the advocates of Christianity, and ask, "Do you want to make us such men as the sailors of your own country ?" It is no uncommon thing, in Calcutta, to see a European lay intoxicated in the street, surrounded by natives, and to hear them tauntingly exclaim, "Here is one of your Europeans : look at him ; you never see us get drunken as you do ! Let your missionaries stop at home, and preach to their own countrymen !" Archdeacon Jeffreys, of Bombay, says :—"An experience of twenty-eight years in India has convinced me that nothing in the least effectual can be done to arrest intemperance in the British army and navy

in India, or to wipe away *the disgrace daily brought on our country and Christianity*, except on the principles of total abstinence; and that till the missionaries adopt it, the cause of missions will not be blest with any extensive success." Mr. Herschell, a converted Jew, records that similar immoralities are among the greatest impediments to Israelites in the reception of the gospel. The same is true of Mohammedans. Indeed, from every part of the world the testimony is uniform—that the prevalence of drunkenness among our countrymen is so extensive, that it is regarded almost as a characteristic of England and of Christianity; and that this is one of the greatest obstacles to the spread of the gospel with which our missionaries have to contend.

The extent of this vice might be argued, with some degree of probability, from the vast sum annually expended in this country in the purchase of intoxicating drinks—a sum exceeding fifty millions sterling. It might reasonably be inferred that the number of drunkards would bear some proportion to the amount of temptation. But we need not rely on inferences. By documentary evidence before the House of Commons, it has been well ascertained that there are, in this country alone, not fewer than 600,000 habitual drunkards! Of these, 60,000 die annually; and their places are supplied by 60,000 others, drawn into the vortex of ruin, from what many regard the safe and happy streams of moderation. So that every ten minutes some fresh victim becomes a drunkard—every ten minutes some drunkard's soul is hurried to a drunkard's eternity!

How overwhelmingly appalling are such statements! How loudly does so dreadful an evil call for the putting forth of every energy to mitigate it! It is no trifling scourge—no insignificant calamity. It is our country's plague-spot. More destructive than pestilence or war, it continuously and unrelentingly spreads its desolating ravages around. It attacks not the body merely, but the soul—it destroys not the life that now is merely, but that which is to come—it is among the greatest foes to the prosperity of the church at home, and the spread of the gospel abroad—it numbers its victims by hundreds of thousands—and surely must be admitted, in the terms of our proposition, to be a vice so destructive and so prevalent, as to demand the special efforts of all Christians to repress it.

II. THE DRUNKARD IS ONLY SECURE FROM THE DANGER OF RENEWED INTEMPERANCE, BY TOTALLY ABSTAINING FROM ALL INDULGENCE IN THOSE BEVERAGES WHICH HAVE BEEN THE OCCASION OF HIS SIN.



If he would avoid intoxication, he must avoid intoxicating drinks. Instrumentally, his only safety is total abstinence. It is not, of course, implied that the gospel, when cordially embraced, will not save a man from this sin, as well as from any other ; but as the gospel saves only in connexion with the use of means, and by prompting us to avoid as well as resist temptation, a drunkard, even if he become a sincere Christian, must avoid the way of temptation by total abstinence, if he would be secure from the danger of being betrayed into his former evil course. If we are instructed to "pray that we enter not into temptation," we are, of course, bound not needlessly to venture near it. Experience abundantly proves, that the most moderate use of alcoholic drinks is perilous ground for the drunkard, and that to venture upon it, is almost always the occasion of a fresh fall. Therefore, total abstinence is his only absolute security.

This position needs little to defend it. Few are disposed to question it. The drunkard has induced upon his system a certain physical habit, by the force of which the first step in his accustomed course urges him onward and downward to the same pit from which he had been dragged. He has power to resist the temptation to the *first* indulgence ; but if he thinks he will retain the same power when tempted to a *second* gratification, he fatally deceives himself. His body is no longer in the same condition—his brain is now unduly excited ; the evil demon that was slumbering has now been roused ; appetite has been terribly invigorated ; self control is lost—he is not the same man he was when first he hesitated, resolved, and yielded ; he sinks again into "the same excess of riot." The passion seemed dead, but it was only dormant ; and a slight indulgence was sufficient to awaken it. Who now can curb it ? The hurricane has come down upon the waters as they slumbered in the moonlight, and you cannot restrain the fury of the waves ; but O, that you had not loosed those winds from their rocky cave ! The train has been ignited, and the mine must explode ; but O, that the fatal spark had not been dropped !

"The hand that *kindles*, cannot *quench* the flame."

All experience proves that the drunkard must refrain altogether, if he would become sober. Whatever may be the case with *others*, *he* cannot drink moderately. His "little" will always expose him to the danger of "too much." And this danger is so great in his case, that the voluntary exposure to such peril makes even moderate indulgence no longer innocent. However "lawful" to others, it is, in his case, more than "not expedient."

To him it is sin. He then may be regarded as the "weak brother;" to whom, though in wine there be "nothing unclean of itself, yet to him it is unclean."

But besides those who are already drunkards, there many who will certainly soon become so. At present they drink *moderately*, but so did once all who are now inebriates. These are exposed to the same danger, and need the same cure.

The obvious inference from what has now been advanced is, that since abstinence is the means of curing and preventing drunkenness, and since drunkenness is so prevalent and destructive an evil, Christians should do all in their power to induce both the incipient and the confirmed drunkard to become total abstainers. But to do this successfully, example must not contradict, but coincide with precept; and this leads to the third topic.

III. THOSE WHO WOULD SUCCESSFULLY PERSUADE OTHERS TO THE PRACTICE OF TOTAL ABSTINENCE, MUST THEMSELVES ABSTAIN.

There are many who readily admit the former position, but who refuse assent to this. "Total Abstinence," say they, "is necessary for the *drunkard*; but why should *we*, who never have been intemperate, deprive ourselves of a moderate indulgence, which to us has never proved dangerous. Teetotalism is well enough for the drunkard, but would be quite useless for us."

In reply to this frequent objection, let it be supposed that none abstained entirely from alcoholic beverages but drunkards. Would not such abstinence at once become a badge, by which such persons would be known? Would not the abstainer, whenever he refused to taste the proffered cup, publish his shame? Would not such refusal testify, "I am one of those unhappy beings who have fallen into the snare of degrading vice, and the power of evil habit is so strong within me, that I am compelled to resist the very first impulse, lest I be overcome. The animal nature has gained in me such power over the moral, that if once my appetite be stimulated, it will be beyond my control. I cannot drink without becoming drunk." Would many be willing to give such an account of themselves to every one in whose company they might chance to be thrown? Is it not a trial too great to impose on a poor inebriate, just longing to burst away from the cruel fetters by which he has so long been bound, and to regain, if possible, the position he has lost? Would he not avoid such a stigma, by flattering himself that he would be able to allow himself a slight indulgence, without being again drawn into excess? But does not all experience prove that this

is all but morally impossible? The remedy is obvious. Let the principles of total abstinence be practised by multitudes who never were suspected of excess, then will the unblemished character of the great proportion of the adherents to this cause convert abstinence from a badge of disgrace to the sign of an honourable confederation. Let consistent Christians enrol themselves as members of Teetotal Associations, and then many a poor drunkard, whom shame would otherwise have kept aloof, will be encouraged to take shelter in the only asylum which offers him safety.

But besides the removal of a stigma of disgrace, the positive influence of the example of the moderate is needed, to make the immoderate abstain. It is still true, that "example is better than precept;" and if it be our duty to persuade the drunkard to become an abstainer, it is surely our duty to do this in the most effectual way. If actions speak louder than words, and it is our duty to employ the latter, is it not still more our duty to use the former? Multitudes are influenced by example, who have no other reason to adduce for their conduct, even when the characters of those setting the example are unknown or disapproved. How much more influential must be the example of the wise and the good!

What, then, would be the probable effect produced on the drunkard, by witnessing a company of persons, of Christian character and unquestioned sobriety, enjoying themselves over their wine? Would he not be likely thus to reason?—"If these good people take their wine, may not I? What is right in them, cannot be wrong in me. I was on the point of relinquishing strong drink altogether; but I see many excellent Christians indulging in it, though without excess, and surely I need not be more strict than they. Besides, I often hear them speak slightly of teetotalism, and some of them seem to regard it as an evil thing. I will therefore avoid it, as an opposite extreme, and take the middle and safe path of moderation." But we have proved that it is *not* a safe path to *him*. The drunkard must literally obey the precept, "*Look* not on the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright." If he look longingly, he will taste; if he taste, he will drink; if he drink, he will become drunken. "At last, it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."

We might even assert, that the example of moderate drinkers is far more injurious than that of drunkards. A fellow-man reeling along under the influence of liquor, uttering oaths and

imprecations, instead of being an enticing spectacle, is an object of dread and loathing to all whom he approaches. Drunkenness itself is attractive to very few; it is the preliminary steps to it which allure; and the more estimable the characters of those whom the drunkard sees allowing themselves the moderate indulgence of strong drink, the greater the inducement for him to go and do likewise. But then, alas! he is unable to stop.

But the moderationist is continually urging this plea: "By taking *one* glass, I sanction no one in taking *two*. By *using* wine, I do not become responsible for others *abusing* it. I set an example of *moderation*, but give no encouragement to *drunkenness*. Let others act as I do, and there will be no drunkards." But are you sure of this, taking your words most literally? Would there be no drunkards, if none exceeded the limits of those who drink without becoming inebriate? On the contrary, will not that which produces no visible effect on one person, often completely prostrate another? Are there not many who can, without any visible effect, take a quantity of liquor, one-fourth of which would make others reel and stagger? Where, then, is the limit of moderation to be placed? Many would say, that two glasses of wine at once is extreme moderation; but there are many others who could not bear up under the influence of even such a potation; not a few on whom the effect of *one* glass would be painfully visible. What then becomes of the objection, "Let others do as I do, and none would be inebriate?" Why the objector himself would be a drunkard if he followed the example of some others, who exceed his own limitations, and yet are esteemed sober men. Granting, then, that your example sanctions no one in going beyond the boundaries you prescribe to yourself, there are many who would be made drunkards merely by doing what *you* do.

But it cannot be admitted, that he who keeps within the limits of moderation, in no sense encourages another to go farther than himself. Were all constitutional and acquired tendencies exactly similar in all persons, this would be the case. But it is far otherwise. And he who, by encouraging to a slight indulgence, arouses the dormant propensity of the drunkard, cannot escape responsibility for the consequences. My neighbour can abstain from one glass; but, having taken it, is always hurried on to a greater number. If, then, I encourage him to take that glass, can I justly plead that my moderation has had no influence in leading him into excess? Suppose he had a morbid inclination to commit suicide with a pistol, but that so long as no such

weapon was within reach, this inclination was dormant ; suppose him master of his own will in the matter of handling the pistol, or refusing to do so, but that when the instrument was once in his possession the tendency to self-destruction became irresistible ; would his friend, having no such inclination, be justified in amusing himself with a pistol, and encouraging the other to do the same ; and would he be justly innocent of the fatal result ? This is the drunkard's case ; and if you would keep the pistol out of reach in the former instance, should you not keep the first cup out of reach in the latter ?

Would you be innocent in leading your neighbour to the edge of a precipice, when you knew an enemy was lying in ambush to thrust him over the brink ; and because no such peril awaited you, would you, exulting in your own safety, plead that you were responsible only for taking him to the brink, and not for his downfall ? And is there not in the drunkard's physical, as well as mental constitution, a foe concealed in the most moderate indulgence, ready to hurry him into the abyss from which he had been happily raised ?

Were you bathing in a strong and deep current, which, by your strength and skill in swimming, you were able to stem, would you invite others to keep you company who possessed not such advantages ? Would you, by exhibiting every appearance of delight, and assuring them it was perfectly safe, encourage a promiscuous group of bystanders to enter the stream ; and if any of them ventured in and were hurried away by the tide, would you deem yourself excused by saying, "I encouraged them to *bathe*, not to *drown*: I enticed them *into* the water, but they alone are in fault for sinking *under* it ?" If, then, those who have power to stem the tide of intemperance, and sport gaily on its surface without being carried away by its influence, entice into the dangerous tide those who possess not equal resolution with themselves, however they may try to satisfy their own consciences, will they as easily escape the condemnation of the word of God ? "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink ; that putteth his bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also."

But besides the 600,000 drunkards we should seek to reclaim, there are 60,000 others who are annually becoming such. They are at present advocates of "*moderation*." But so were those who are now drunkards. Who sets out with the deliberate design of becoming a sot ? Would not almost the whole of the 600,000 tell us, "We began by resolving to enjoy ourselves by drinking moderately, as you do ; but were after-

wards insensibly led on to excess !” Where, then, are we to find the 60,000, who, ere twelve months have fled, will be numbered with the inebriate host, but among the ranks of the *móderationists*? Who are they? Is the reader, who is at present a moderate drinker, quite sure *he* will not, ere long, have crossed the fatal border? Is he quite sure that his friend, his brother, his child, his partner in life, may not, ere long, become a victim? How does he know that, by his moderate indulgence, he may not be now encouraging in the first step to ruin, some who are most dear to him, and whom at present he regards as incapable of being led into excess? Were not many of the 600,000 apparently as safe a year ago? The tale of 60,000 must be furnished; for the 60,000 annual deaths leave the number undiminished; they must be drafted from somewhere—why not from among ourselves? Should not the bare possibility fill us with alarm, and prompt every exertion to avert so dreadful a calamity? But if all persons who are not drunkards, were from this day to abstain, there would soon be no drunkenness—for the army of drunkards, not receiving any new recruits, would soon die out; so that this vice would necessarily become speedily extinct, by all moderationists becoming abstainers.

Since, then, there are drunkards whom nothing but total abstinence can cure, and moderate drinkers whom nothing but the same principle can save, should not every effort be made to induce them to adopt it? And though *we* may be infallibly safe, should we not lend the force of our example to the course we recommend? Will they not be likely to flatter themselves, that if we can drink without excess, they can do so likewise? And if we act and speak as though the indulgence gave us pleasure, unattended with peril, can we be so likely to influence those who *are* in jeopardy to abstain altogether, as if we ourselves abstained? And does not our very sobriety, and the reputation for piety which we may enjoy, afford an additional sanction to those who imitate us? Are there not, in fact, very many well-known cases, in which it was the example of the minister, the deacon, the Christian friend or parent, which chiefly encouraged in the first steps of a course which has led to temporal and eternal ruin?

The application of the scriptural principle with which we set out is obvious. If Paul would not eat so long as the world might endure, if his brother was thereby induced to commit an act, sinful, not in itself, but only because it would be a violation of the dictates of his imperfectly instructed conscience, how much more ought we to avoid any course which leads others to commit,

not some act which in itself is indifferent, but one which is expressly condemned by the word of God! Strong drink is the ruin of multitudes. Its moderate use by some, greatly encourages others to an indulgence which is excessive. Originally purposing to go no farther than ourselves, our weak brother, through our example, stumbleth, is offended, is made weak, and falls! Is it not our duty, then, to remove the cause of offence, by discontinuing the perilous example? If drunkenness is so destructive and prevalent an evil as to demand the special efforts of Christians to repress it—if the only security for the drunkard is total abstinence—and if, by totally abstaining ourselves, we can encourage others to do the same, who otherwise would be in danger of excess, then, for our allying ourselves to the temperance cause, is there not all the force of a Divine command in the great and noble principle of the apostle:—"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or made weak."

#### OBJECTIONS.

A brief reference will now be made to some of the objections frequently adduced against total abstinence.

Some urge the plea that their health and strength would suffer by adopting the principle. In answer to this widely prevalent opinion, it may be sufficient to quote the following extract from a testimony signed by Sir Benj. Brodie, Dr. Chambers, Sir James Clarke, Dr. Marshall Hall, and many others of the most eminent medical men in the kingdom:—"An opinion, handed down, from rude and ignorant times, and imbibed by Englishmen from their youth, has become very general, that the habitual use of some portion of alcoholic drink, as of wine, beer, or spirit, is beneficial to health, and even necessary for those subjected to habitual labour. Anatomy, physiology, and the experience of all ages and countries, when properly examined, must satisfy every mind well informed in medical science, that the above opinion is *altogether erroneous*. Man, in ordinary health, like other animals, requires not any such stimulants, and *cannot be benefited by the habitual employment of any quantity of them, large or small; nor will their use during his life-time increase the aggregate amount of his labour. In whatever quantity they are employed, they will rather tend to diminish it.*"

Sir Astley Cooper says:—"We have all been in error in recommending wine as a tonic. Ardent spirits and poison are convertible terms." The stimulus given is not *strength*, and

is always *exceeded* by the subsequent depression. The inevitable re-action leaves the system weaker than at first. This has been tested in all kinds of labour ; so that it has been most satisfactorily proved, that men working on the principles of total abstinence can accomplish much more, and be stronger at the end of their task, than those who seek strength from alcoholic drinks. And as for the danger of a *sudden* relinquishment, which some seem to dread, our prison discipline sufficiently shows men can at once be deprived of their customary beverage ; and, instead of being injured, are improved in health by the sudden adoption of total abstinence. Still, whenever an individual is well-convinced, and on good authority, that a certain quantity of wine or other liquor is really necessary for his health, the principles of total abstinence condemn not such a use. In this case the drink is medicinal. Total abstinence applies merely to the employment of intoxicating drinks as a *beverage* ; and therefore he who takes wine purely as a medicine, may, at the same time, be a consistent advocate of the cause.

“But why sign the pledge, deprive myself of liberty, and imply the feebleness of the *general* pledge which I am under to Christ?” In the case of the drunkard, this act of decision strengthens his own purpose. When given as a reason for refusing solicitations to drink, it most successfully puts a stop to importunities which otherwise might be too powerful. It does not deprive of liberty. Of course, while the pledge remains, it deprives of the liberty of *breaking* it. But who would covet such a liberty? Yet there is always liberty to *withdraw* it. “Where, then, is the advantage of it?” To withdraw the pledge is a deliberate act ; to retract a mere mental resolution, may be a sudden and unpremeditated one. In withdrawing one’s name, opportunity is given for reconsideration, which is not afforded in a case where no engagement with others needs to be cancelled before the temptation can be truthfully yielded to. For others, who are in no danger of excess, there may be the same reason for taking the pledge, as for acting on the principle of it, viz. the benefit of their example. Neither can their general obligation to Christ be a difficulty, if it be not equally an objection to their signing the various engagements to which men are continually required to affix their names in domestic and commercial transactions. He who objects, on this ground, to sign the *Temperance* pledge, should also object to the pledge of the marriage register, or the pledge of the promissory note.

The extravagant words and deeds of the friends of total



abstinence are often urged as an objection to the cause. But if every cause is to be condemned which may have had unwise or uncharitable advocates, every form of Christianity would be repudiated. The folly of an adherent proves nothing against the goodness of his cause, unless the folly be proved to be bound up in the principles of the cause itself. Some teetotalers may have acted unwisely, spoken harshly, dogmatically, and uncharitably, and pushed their principles to an extravagant excess ; but does this prove their *principles* to be unsound ? The only wonder is, that there has been so little that is reprehensible in the advocacy of the cause, when it is remembered how much it has been deserted by the more educated and reflecting classes. They who adduce the charge, in most cases criminate themselves. If, as it is frequently and contemptuously asserted, teetotalers are, for the most part, vulgar and uneducated, why expect that their proceedings should manifest all the mildness and wisdom of the polite and the learned ? Let the latter ally themselves to the cause, and their influence will at once remove the evil.

Some object on the ground that the gospel can do all that is designed by total abstinence, and that it can do it better. But how many will not *listen* to it ! The gospel will not benefit a man who is not in a condition to attend to it. Temperance Societies endeavour to bring the drunkard into a condition in which he may profit by the truth, just as a madman must be cured of his insanity before he can be instructed in religion. A deaf person could only become acquainted with the gospel by *reading*. But until he is taught to read, he must remain ignorant of that gospel. Would it then be right to discourage the Christian friend, who sought his conversion, and who began by teaching him to read, by saying, "The gospel can save without the art of reading ?" Just so, efforts are made to induce the drunkard to become sober, in order that he may be brought within the reach of the means of grace. It is true that the Spirit of God may arrest the drunkard during some brief interval of imperfect sanity ; but these cases are very rare. Experience proves that very few drunkards have thus been saved, while multitudes, who first became "sober," have subsequently become "righteous and godly." The Rev. Wm. Jay, of Bath, says, "Where I have known one individual rescued from drunkenness by preaching the gospel, a hundred have been reformed by means of Total Abstinence Societies." The Rev. J. A. James, of Birmingham, says, "Far from thinking the Temperance Reformation the sole means of converting sinners, we deem it but an

*auxiliary* to the great cause of religious truth. It is intended, not to *supersede*, but to make way for other means."

It is objected by some that total abstinence is substituted for true piety, and renders men satisfied with mere sobriety. That quite contrary principles are continually announced at the numerous temperance meetings which the writer has attended, he is happy to testify. If some rest contented with an escape from drunkenness, it is their own fault, not that of the temperance cause. There is a tendency in the human heart to pride itself in all appearance of goodness. But if this be an objection to sobriety, it is equally so to benevolence, truth, and honesty. It is certainly better that unconverted men should be sober than riotous—else it were better to encourage also falsehood, theft, cruelty, and every other crime. But drunkenness differs from other vices in this important particular, that it incapacitates the mind for attention to religion. It is therefore more important to endeavour to reclaim men from this vice than from any other. But Christians, engaging in this work, will not allow those whom they are the means of reclaiming from intemperance, to imagine that sobriety is religion. They will, as they do, continually announce, that the sober man is still "an enemy to God, by wicked works;" and that, though he will find a present reward from his sobriety, he can neither enjoy God's favour here, nor eternal life hereafter, unless he become "a new creature in Christ Jesus." Let those who are jealous for the honour of the gospel hold aloof from the cause, and they themselves are to blame if these truths are not associated with the advocacy of temperance.

"But is not the use of wine sanctioned in Scripture?" We reply, "Is its use commanded as a duty?" Paul's recommendation to Timothy was advice, rather than command. Let it be remembered that the highest medical authorities pronounce the use of alcoholic beverages not necessary for persons in *health*, and that where the physician recommends them in cases of "often infirmities," the principles of teetotalism allow their use. This, therefore, is no objection to our argument. The *habitual* use of fermented beverages may be sanctioned by the Bible, but this, also, will not affect our position. We allow that the use of alcohol is not in itself sinful. All we contend for is, that in the circumstances of our age and country, it is not expedient. Paul said, all things were lawful to him, yet he declared he would not eat meat, nor drink wine, however lawful, if thereby others were injured. There can be no sin in abstinence—there may be great evil done by indulgence. And granting that inspired men, and

even Christ himself, did not abstain, were not great principles laid down by them to be applied according to rising exigencies? And considering the awful ravages of drunkenness at the present day, is it quite certain that those who uttered such great principles of benevolence, though they might partake of the wines of that day, would not have advocated abstinence now? On the grounds, then, of expediency and benevolence, this appeal is made. We say not that in the temperate use of wine there is "anything unclean of itself," but that it encourages the grand prevailing vice of the day; and that the general adoption of total abstinence by the Christian church, would be a powerful inducement to those to do likewise, who cannot, without imminent peril of excess, indulge at all.

If we are convinced of this, our duty is obvious. Love to Christ and to souls requires actions corresponding to such convictions. Those, however, who decline the adoption of our principle, must not be condemned for a deficiency of this love. They may be prepared to do everything which the welfare of their fellow-men demands, but may not be convinced that *their* concurrence in this cause would be of any advantage. While zeal demands that every effort be made to produce conviction, charity forbids the imputation of selfishness. Yet if the reader is not satisfied that he himself is required to become an abstainer, the charity he demands he ought to exercise. There surely can be no *sin* in abstinence; and though he may not adopt it, can he justify himself in condemning or ridiculing those who do? If he think his own influence would be useless, he must admit that the influence of others has been beneficial, and that at least their motives have been good. If it be too much to expect that all sincere Christians will ally themselves to our cause, is it unreasonable to hope that they will abstain from ridiculing, condemning, opposing it?

Especially is this cause urged on the attention of Christian ministers. Should they not avoid "the least appearance of an evil" so frightful and so prevalent? May they not be unexpectedly surprised into excess? May not a peculiar state of the system cause the glass which ordinarily has no visible effect, to expose them to the quick eye of those who are ever on the watch to detect the slightest inconsistency? "A city set on a hill cannot be hid." Might not their capacity for future usefulness thus be suddenly greatly diminished, or altogether destroyed? If absolutely secure themselves, should not the possibility of injuring others prevail with them? The influence of their example cannot

be over-estimated. How many have been encouraged in a course which has led them to ruin, by the drinking habits of those to whom they look up as "ensamples to the flock!" Sharp eyes are on "the man of God," in the parlour as well as the pulpit; and children, and servants, professors and non-professors, observe the replenishing of the wine-cup, or the mixing of the spirituous draught. The dinner-table doings of ministers are watched, remembered, and talked over, as some of them little suspect, and would deeply deplore. They lament the ravages which drunkenness makes in their flocks; but how can they successfully urge the endangered sheep to keep within an enclosure, on the outside of which they themselves wander with safety, and apparently, with satisfaction too? Moreover, whether we aid it or not, a great work is going on, which is doing very much to elevate the condition and character, and increase the comforts, of the working classes. Should not Christianity, which has a promise of the life that now is as well as of that which is to come, take the lead in every enterprize of philanthropy? Should she not always shew a zealous sympathy in every good work? Should not Christian ministers especially be always seen in the front rank, thus imitating Him who went about doing good? If Christians do not occupy their proper post, others will; and if movements so advantageous to mankind are conducted by persons destitute of godliness, or opposed to it, will not the influence on the minds of the multitude be extremely prejudicial? Will they not infer that the irreligious are better friends to them than Christians? And ought not, therefore, the champions of the truth to be leaders in this and every good work—and shew by their conduct, that the gospel is what its Divine Founder intended and designed it to be, the best friend of man?—Besides, what new paths of usefulness are open to the minister of Christ, by advocating total abstinence before multitudes who would not otherwise hear his voice! for, of course, he would not forget his chief commission, but would ever blend the message of redemption with the exhortation to sobriety. Thus he obtains an opportunity of urging Christian truth on many who would not otherwise hear it. Besides which, very many who hear him with pleasure advocating the cause of temperance, will be induced to follow him to the church. The writer of this tract and many others, have thus had the unspeakable privilege of being instrumental not only in reclaiming the drunkard, but in "converting the sinner from the error of his way." And who would relinquish such a privilege for any per-

sonal indulgence, or for the sake of avoiding singularity and ridicule ?

The repression of drunkenness has been the point mainly insisted on in this essay. Many confirmatory arguments might be added. Food is destroyed to a frightful extent, amounting to more than forty millions of bushels of grain annually ; enough for the supply of two millions of people. How sinful a destruction of common property would it be regarded, where food sufficient for the whole population of London, to be annually cast into the sea ! But would not this be less injurious than changing the nutritive properties of grain into that which, in multitudes of cases, destroys both soul and body ? And is not every consumer of liquor obtained from grain, partly responsible for this waste ?

Malting necessitates Sabbath-breaking, as the process cannot be performed within seven days ; and thus forty thousand persons are necessitated to neglect the day of rest. Does not every one who uses malt liquor share in the responsibility of this sin also ?

At the lowest computation, sixty millions sterling are annually expended in this country alone, in the purchase of alcoholic drinks ; while the indirect losses caused by drunkenness, amount to at least fifty millions more. More than one hundred millions are thus consumed by strong drink ; while the total sum contributed by all the Missionary Societies for sending the gospel throughout the world, does not amount to half a million ! Two hundred times more spent in strong drink, than in the conversion of the world. But taking the amount directly expended, viz. sixty millions, still, one hundred and twenty times more is contributed by this country in the purchase of that which is the destruction of the bodies and souls of thousands, than in sending the bread of life to the millions who are perishing for lack of knowledge.

Consider what might be effected with such a sum ! It would sustain 200,000 missionaries at £200 (about one missionary to every 3,000 adult heathen) ; 100,000 schoolmasters at £100 ; 2,000 superannuated labourers at £100 ; build 2,000 churches at £2,000 ; 2,000 schools at £500 ; issue 50,000 bibles at 1s. 6d. every day ; and 100,000 tracts at 4s. per 100 every day ; give to 50,000 widows, 5s. a week ; and present to 192,815 poor families, £10 on Christmas-day. And though the Christian church is not responsible for the whole of this vast amount, yet it greatly *aids* in raising it. It is a low estimate that there are in Great Britain 1,500,000 persons who make some profession of seriousness. Supposing that each spends, on an average, sixpence

farthing per week in strong drink, the total annual amount expended will exceed two millions. At our missionary meetings, the cry of the heathen is sounded in our ears, "Come over and help us;" we are told that vast nations are accessible; that suitable labourers are saying, "Here am I, send me;" and that the great desideratum is an increased revenue; and yet we are annually spending in strong drink—in that which, if not injurious, is at least of questionable utility—which most persons would be better without—which is the bane of thousands—four times as much as we are able to raise for the purpose of fulfilling the Divine command, "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature!" Exciting meetings are held, earnest appeals are made, ministers and missionaries travel over the length and breadth of the land, collectors are daily at work, gathering up the fragments of Christian benevolence, and the total result is half a million! But were the Christian church to deny itself of this one article of unnecessary luxury, the sum thus raised without effort, would at once quadruple the number of our missionaries; and this by an act which, while sending the gospel to the heathen abroad, would tend most powerfully to the prevention and cure of drunkenness at home.

Christians! think of these things! Contemplate the terrible scourge that lacerates society, the dreadful plague that devastates our land. Can we look on with indifference, while six hundred thousand drunkards pass in terrible procession, scattering misery around them, as blindly and recklessly they urge their way to the blackness of darkness for ever? Is it nothing that sixty thousand annually sink into that abyss; while sixty thousand fresh victims are forced from among ourselves to join the ranks of death? True, the cry of distress is wafted wailingly to us from beyond the sea; but how piteous a lament arises from our own coasts, from among our fellow-countrymen all around! It comes from many a distressed household and desolated hearth—from many a squalid children of wretchedness and rags—from many a worn and wasted wife, doomed to see her babes pine away with want and to receive curses from the lips which, but for alcohol, would have breathed only love, and blows from the arm, which otherwise would have been used only to caress her and labour for her support. It rises from our gloomy poorhouses, which alcohol has mainly contributed to fill; and from our crowded prisons, which, but for its votaries, would be almost tenantless. Our national honour invokes us—the credit of the English name. The world around us pleads, thrust back in its

onward march. The missionaries of the gospel appeal to us, hindered in their work by this great obstacle to its spread. The church at home, from many a gaping, bleeding wound, implores us to come to her aid. We speak with abhorrence of bloody persecutors. The tale of the Queen of Madagascar murdering, for the faith of Jesus, some hundreds of her peaceful subjects, has filled us with dismay. We shudder when we hear of the abominations of Moloch worship, with its human sacrifices; of Sutteeism, burning its widows on the funeral pyre; or of the murderous car of Juggernaut, crushing hundreds of deluded devotees beneath its gory wheels; but what is all this compared to the atrocities which drunkenness has wrought—that demon of darkness which has already devoured millions, and year by year still drags down to hell its victims, by tens of thousands, from among our countrymen alone!

With what horror should we hear of sixty thousand persons being led forth for butchery, by some blood-thirsty tyrant! How would one such an atrocity in the entire range of the world's history be referred to with execration in all succeeding ages! But what if it were repeated *every* year! And what of, besides similar enormities elsewhere, this annual slaughter occurred in our *own land*! How would all the classes combine to raise their voices and their hands, and to sacrifice their all, to stay so terrible a curse! But is it less terrible, because it has become familiar; and because it ruins the soul, as well as the body? Ah, there comes a piercing shriek to us from the unseen world! The hundreds of thousands of victims to strong drink, who have entered an eternity of woe, seem to invoke us to warn the dense crowd that press on their heels, lest "they also come into the same place of torment." Shall the appeal be in vain? shall we rather seem to encourage them in their destructive course, by practically discountenancing the only effectual means for their deliverance? shall we sanction them, by sipping pleasure from a cup which to them is drugged with death? shall we apply the igniting torch to the furnace which may destroy them for ever; or, if already lighted, shall we, by our example, seem to fan the flames? Shall we not rather endeavour to pluck the drunkard "as a brand from the burning," by acting out the great principle of the apostle, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or made weak?"

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# THE BIBLE.

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## WHAT ENGLAND MIGHT DO.

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SUPPOSING the Bible Society to continue its operations on the same scale as during the last two years, it will take upwards of

**SIX HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN YEARS**

to supply the Sacred Scriptures to the whole of the heathen world.

Contrast this fact with the following :—

The sum *annually* spent in spirits, wine, and malt liquors, in the United Kingdom, would, in

**ONE YEAR,**

purchase a two shilling copy of the Bible for each of the *seven hundred millions* of poor benighted heathens.



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*Societies may receive 24 Sixpenny Packets of Tracts and Hand Bills in any part of London, by a post-office order for 10s. 6d., or 50 packets for 21s., being sent to Richard Dykes Alexander, Ipswich. All Country Booksellers may obtain Tracts through William Tweedie, 337, Strand, London.*